

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF
LAVINIA L. DOCK



A HOTEL FOR NURSES

A HOTEL for nurses is, without a doubt, an urgent need in at least our largest cities. It has been talked of in New York, and Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago must need one just as badly. The word "hotel," though, does not give the right impression. It sounds public, expensive, un-homelike. Nurses are a peculiar people and need special conditions of living. They do not fit in at all in the average boarding-house. They are, in fact, troublesome. Hotels and boarding-houses prefer to get rid of them. Their hours, their work, their telephone calls, make them undesirable tenants. Therefore our club-houses and nurses' homes fill a great need, but only for the members of their own circle. A "transient" cannot get into our club-houses. A stranger nurse is in a forlorn condition in a great city in our big country.

We have talked about a hotel open to all nurses in New York City, and when in London I saw Miss Catherine Wood's successful creation and work, the Nurses' Hostel, I felt at once that it was exactly what we so greatly need at home. First, the name, "hostel," is so much more pleasing than "hotel;" this old word, hostel, conveys an impression of home-like cheer and cosy snugness quite different from the "hotel" idea. And so, indeed, it is. Miss Wood's hostel has a home-iness, a quiet, a plain and simple comfort and privacy, and a cheery atmosphere quite ideal.

Is it not possible that we could evolve something on this line at home?

Not only can nurses from all over the world find accommodation here, if they are abroad in pursuit of their calling, instead of being lost in a big city, but, also, this hostel is so ably managed that it pays dividends, thus proving its success as a good business enterprise. It is centrally located, in a part of London where land must be very valuable, and is in two blocks, one on each side of the street. The old block is, in many details, of greater simplicity than American nurses would like in the matter of sleeping accommodations. It has cubicles, which we are not accustomed to. But the new block, planned by Miss Wood in the light of her experience, has single rooms, excellent modern sanitary conveniences, and is in every way, in convenience, in furnishing, and in

pleasant, attractive appearance, as nice as anyone would want anywhere, unless they were unreasonably exacting. Both blocks have large, pleasant sitting-rooms, dining-rooms, electric light, box-rooms for storing trunks, bicycle storage, package-rooms, and modern plumbing.

Nurses working in London may have a permanent home there, and those visiting London for business or pleasure may stay as transients. The former may obtain *unfurnished* rooms if they wish to have their own furniture and belongings. Such permanent tenants may have their breakfast served in their rooms, and the scale of charges is so arranged that all guests pay for exactly what they have.

Bed and breakfast only is so much. Each meal is for a fixed price. Charges for storage, telephone messages, service, etc., are all fixed and definite, and all exceedingly reasonable. As the scale of prices in one country is not of much practical use in another, I will not try to give them, but a single bedroom with all meals inclusive is about six dollars a week, bed in single room with breakfast only, about seventy-five cents a day, cubicle or double room quite a little less.

The moderate list of regulations is simply such as is found in any hotel, and absolutely no burdensome restrictions or rules exist. Nurses not personally known to the management are required to furnish satisfactory references—this is only proper, and the management reserves the right, which any hotel has, of excluding undesirable persons. Outside of the few necessary stipulations for order and regular routine the utmost freedom is enjoyed, and yet the active and genial ever-ready presence of a “home-sister” and Miss Wood herself give the real home feeling. For any nurse who needs it advice and counsel are always there. No directory is connected with the hotel. Nurses must make their connections for private duty in whatever coöperation or association they please, but calls and messages, letters, telegrams, etc., are punctually delivered or attended to. I cannot but think that there is a great lack in our nursing communities at home as long as we have no such hostel. The business side is that of an incorporated stockholding company, and pays three and one-half per cent. dividend, net.

L. L. D.

LETTER

CAMPANIA MINERA DE PENDES,
MAPIMI,
ESTADO DE DURANGO, MEX.,
September 22, 1904.

DEAR EDITOR: The old saying, “better late than never,” certainly fits my case. I hope you will pardon my long delay in complying with your kind request that I describe my surroundings and labors in Mexico.